

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ABIDJA 00159 061502Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /023 W
-----085285 061508Z /46

R 061159Z JAN 78 ZFF-4
FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
TO NAVWARCOL NEWPORT RK
SECSTATE WASHDC 6827
SECDEF WASHDC
INFO CNO WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY
DIA WASHDC
USDAO MONROVIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABIDJAN 0159

SECDEF FOR ISA AND DSAA

CNO FOR OP-63

USCINCEUR FOR ECJ4/7-SA

DIA ADMIN MSG FOR AH-8

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, IV
SUBJECT: STAFF COURSE FOR INTERNATIONAL OFFICERS

1. MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AKE AND MINISTER OF MARINE AFFAIRS
FADIGA REGRETFULLY INFORMED AMBASSADOR STEARNS YESTERDAY (JANUARY
FOUR) THAT IVORIAN NAVY WILL NOT, REPEAT, NOT BE ABLE TO RELEASE
ITS COMMANDER OR HIS DEPUTY TO ATTEND THE INTERNATIONAL OFFICERS
COURSE SCHEDULED TO BEGIN 16 JANUARY AT THE NAVY WAR COLLEGE. TWO
MINISTERS TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT THEY WERE GRATIFIED THAT UNITED
STATES HAD EXTENDED INVITATION, BUT THAT TO RELEASE COMMANDER OR
DEPUTY COMMANDER FOR FIVE MONTHS' TRAINING ABROAD, SEVERAL MONTHS'
ADVANCE NOTICE WOULD BE REQUIRED TO ASSURE ORDERLY CONDUCT OF NAVAL
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AFFAIRS DURING PERIOD KEY OFFICER WAS AWAY. THE POINTED OUT THAT
WHILE WE HAD RAISED SUBJECT INFORMALLY WITH THEM IN NOVEMBER,
FORMAL INVITATION HAD NOT BEEN ISSUED UNTIL THIS WEEK. MINISTERS
ALSO REMARKED THAT WINTER AND SPRING WOULD BE EXCEPTIONALLY BUSY
TIME FOR IVORIAN NAVY. THREE FRENCH NAVAL VESSELS WILL BE IN
ABIDJAN IN FEBRUARY TO SUPPORT JOINT FRANCO-IVORIAN MANEUVERS, AND
SOMETIME BETWEEN 15 JANUARY AND END OF FEBRUARY, NEW GABONESE FAST

PATROL CRAFT OMAR BONGO IS ALSO SCHEDULED TO CALL IN ABIDJAN ON ITS WAY TO LIBREVILLE. BOTH COMMANDER AND DEPUTY COMMANDER OF IVORIAN NAVY ARE HEAVILY ENGAGED IN PLANNING FOR BOTH THESE VISITS, AS WELL AS VISIT OF FRENCH PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING, BEGINNING JANUARY 11. FROM PRACTICAL STANDPOINT, THEREFORE, AS MUCH AS IVORIANS WOULD LIKE TO AVAIL THEMSELVES OF INTERNATIONAL OFFICERS COURSE, THEY CANNOT SPARE ONE OF THEIR TWO KEY OFFICERS FOR THE CURRENT COURSE. AKE AND FADIGA SAID THAT THEY HOPED ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY WOULD BE OFFERED AND THAT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO GIVE THE IVORIAN GOVERNMENT MORE ADVANCE NOTICE. AMBASSADOR EXPLAINED THAT BECAUSE CURRENT INVITATION RESULTED FROM FALL-OUT FUNDS, ADVANCE NOTICE HAD NECESSARILY BEEN SHORT. HE COULD NOT SAY WHETHER ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY WOULD ARISE, SINCE FUNDING WAS ALWAYS A PROBLEM, BUT THAT IN VIEW OF IVORIAN INTEREST, HE WOULD SEE WHAT COULD BE DONE. BOTH MINISTERS EXPRESSED THEIR APPRECIATION FOR THE INVITATION AND THEIR REGRET THAT THE IVORIAN GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN UNABLE TO ACCEPT IT THIS TIME.

2. WHILE WE REGRET THAT THE IVORIAN GOVERNMENT CANNOT SEND SOMEONE TO THE INTERNATIONAL OFFICERS COURSE THIS MONTH, WE DO NOT, REPEAT, NOT BELIEVE THAT THE MANY HOURS OF HARD WORK IN WASHINGTON, GERMANY, AND ABIDJAN HAVE BEEN WASTED. THE FACT THAT COURSE WAS OFFERED HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TAKES IVORIAN NAVY CAPABILITIES SERIOUSLY AND IS WILLING TO PROVIDE TRAINING ASSISTANCE WHERE NEEDED. WE BELIEVE THAT THE IVORIAN GOVERNMENT IS SINCERE IN SAYING THAT ADVANCE NOTICE FOR THE CURRENT COURSE WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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TOO SHORT AND THAT WITH MORE TIME TO PREPARE ADEQUATELY FOR THE COMMANDER OR DEPUTY COMMANDER'S ABSENCE DURING A FIVE-MONTH PERIOD, THE IVORIANS WOULD ACCEPT A SUBSEQUENT INVITATION ENTHUSIASTICALLY. WE STRONGLY URGE, THEREFORE, THAT THE INTEREST GENERATED IN IVORIAN NAVY CIRCLES NOT BE PERMITTED TO EVAPORATE AND THAT PLANNING BEGIN NOW TO ISSUE AN INVITATION TO THE IVORIAN NAVY COMMANDER OR HIS DEPUTY TO ATTEND INTERNATIONAL OFFICERS COURSE ONE YEAR FROM NOW. WE BELIEVE THAT COURSE BEGINNING JANUARY 1979, REPEAT, 1979 IS MORE REALISTIC TARGET THAN COURSE BEGINNING JULY/AUGUST OF THIS YEAR, SINCE FADIGA TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT TWO NEW IVORIAN SHIPS ARE TO BE COMMISSIONED IN SEPTEMBER -- AN UNDERTAKING THAT WOULD MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR GOIC TO RELEASE COMMANDER OR DEPUTY COMMANDER THIS SUMMER.

STEARNS

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